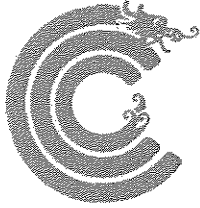


CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII

夏威夷中華總商會

Established 1911



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執行副會長	林文忠

June 9, 2009

The Honorable Todd Apo, Chair,
and Members of the City Council
City and County of Honolulu
530 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Regular City Council Meeting, Wednesday, June 10, 2009
Bill No.15, Executive Operating Budget, CD2

Dear Chairman Apo and Council Members:

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii strongly supports the City's Office of Economic Development and believes that full funding for this office is vital during these tough economic times.

The Chamber has worked closely with OED for many years. Each year, in October, we have held the Splendor of China at the Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall. The OED has helped promote the event, which brings in hundreds of vendors and thousands of customers to buy their goods. In January or February, depending on the Chinese lunar calendar, there is the month-long Chinatown Chinese New Year celebration, which the OED coordinates with numerous other Chinese organizations, including the Chamber. This year's event had record crowds, with tens of thousands of people attending. For many merchants in Chinatown and at the Chinatown Cultural Plaza, a significant portion of their annual income comes from these events.

More importantly, last month, the Chinese Chamber finally moved into a new building they can call their own. After almost 100 years in existence and for the first time, the Chamber has the space and facilities so that our organization can reach its full potential and make the greatest impact on the community.

We recently created the Chinatown Community Development Center, which will have free classes, outreach, referral services, and mentoring for the community. Another Center area of emphasis will be revitalizing Chinatown neighborhood through community collaboration, research, and policy development. A third area will deal with foreign relations and exchanges of all kinds in the fields of business, culture, education, and science.

The Chinatown Community Development Center cannot function without partners such as the OED. Recently, the OED wrote four letters of support for the Chamber's Development Center in order to develop two sister city relationships in China, as well as to increase economic and cultural ties with China. I will personally deliver these letters to high Chinese officials this month during our Narcissus Goodwill Tour to China. These increased ties and exchanges with foreign countries, many with actively growing economies and hundreds of thousands of their citizens wanting to travel to Hawaii, hold great potential for Oahu and the State of Hawaii, particularly during these challenging economic times.

We urge you to fully support OED so that all potential avenues to improve and revitalize the Chinatown area as well as to strengthen our local economy can be explored. We believe that this will be a good investment for the City.

Sincerely

DENNIS J. HWANG
President, CCCH

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